

November 2011

St. Raymond's Respects Life Newsletter

The newsletter of the Respect Life Committee of St. Raymond's Parish
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This month's newsletter is packed with information.

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This month we focus on the local and state elections on Tuesday, November 8th. Following your conscience in the voting booth is the exercise of an important Catholic teaching. Father De Celles introduced us to the topic in his [Voting](#) of October 2nd, the 27th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Respect Life Sunday. He continued the theme on [October 16th, the 29th Sunday of Ordinary Time](#) when he preached on the familiar theme, "Render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." Here he gave us a catechesis of what it means to be a Catholic with regard to voting. Being pro-life is synonymous with being Catholic. You cannot be a Catholic without being pro-life. It is worth reading and using his arguments in talking to others about the subject. Since we are on the subject of voting, the [USCCB recently republished its document on voting, Faithful Citizenship](#), from four years ago. Note the language in paragraph 42 of the document that:

A candidate's position on a single issue is not sufficient to guarantee a voter's support. Yet a candidate's position on a single issue that involves an intrinsic evil, such as support for legal abortion or the promotion of racism, may legitimately lead a voter to disqualify a candidate from receiving support (#42).

To find the positions of the candidates on these issues, we suggest that you visit their websites. The candidates for the State Senate and House of Delegates races are listed below. The voting records for incumbents can be found on the [Virginia Catholic Conference \(VCC\) website](#).

Senate 37th District: Jason Flanary (R) and Dave W. Marsden (D)

This district encompasses the portion of the parish within the triangle roughly bounded by Sydenstricker Road, FFX Parkway, and Huntsman Road.

Senate 39th District: M. Miller Baker (R) and George Lincoln Barker (D)

This district is the entire parish except that area within the triangle roughly bounded by Sydenstricker Road, FFX Parkway, and Huntsman Road.

House 39th District: Dimitris A. Kolazas (I) and Vivian E. Watts (D)

This district encompasses the portion of the parish within the triangle roughly bounded by Rolling Road, Pohick Road, and Pohick Creek (the Saratoga subdivisions).

House 42nd District: David B. Albo (R) and J.R. “Jack” Dobbyn, Jr (D)

This district is the entire parish except that area within the triangle roughly bounded by Rolling Road, Pohick Road, and Pohick Creek (the Saratoga subdivisions).

We encourage everyone to exercise their freedom as an American citizen and vote on Tuesday. While we cannot tell you whom to vote for, you will need to investigate all of the races prior to the election in light of the teachings of the Catholic Church which you have heard [preached](#) more than once. For your information, the local races (county supervisors, school board members, etc) do not have a party affiliation next to their names on the ballot. Other resources available could be each political party’s website or, ask at party tables outside the voting place.

Last month, we published a letter by AB Dolan to President Obama on the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). There is an [update](#) below.

[Father De Celles’ Homily of October 2nd:](#)

The first Sunday of October, has, for years, been designated by the Catholic Bishops in America as “Respect Life Sunday.”

So, as I have for the last 16 years, today I will preach on the topic of respecting life: specifically on the evil of abortion.

But I gotta tell you, part of me wonders: Why? What good does it do?

After all these years of 1000’s of priests, bishops and Popes, proclaiming the Gospel of Life so many Catholics still don’t understand that abortion is destroying not only the lives of millions of unborn babies, and their mothers, but also mankind’s fundamental respect for all aspects human life.

[Read more](#)

[Father De Celles’ Homily of October 16th:](#)

Render to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God."

As many times as we’ve heard this text, perhaps it’s never been more apropos than today, as we approach state elections in just 3 weeks away, and as next years national elections are the topic of daily headlines.

Some try to use this text to tell the Church to mind it’s own business and keep its nose out of public debate, especially out of elections

Others, however, use it to defend the Church’s involvement in politics.

So what is the meaning of the dichotomy between Caesar and God that Christ lays out? [Read more](#)

[USCCB Document on Voting: “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship – A Call to Political Responsibility from the Catholic Bishops of the United states with Introductory Note”](#)

Other Significant Respect Life Articles and Activities this Past Month:

1. *To follow-up on the discussion last month about Archbishop Dolan's personal letter to President Obama asking that his administration **not only support** the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), **but stop** publicly opposing it **to include** in the courts, Bob Laird wrote an [editorial on the subject](#) which takes this anti-marriage issue far beyond DOMA.*

Archbishop Dolan to President Obama: Push the Reset Button on DOMA – by Bob Laird, Fellow, HLI America

Sandwiched between this year's presidential proclamations in honor of Mother's Day and Father's Day was their antithesis, one celebrating Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month. In the former, the White House declared, respectively, that "[m]others are the rocks of our families and the foundation in our communities;" and "we honor the men in our lives who have helped shape us for the good, and we recommit to supporting fatherhood in our families, in our communities, and across our Nation." In the latter announcement, the president proclaimed his desire to see that "all people can live with dignity and fairness under the law."

At first glance, these three statements do not appear to be in conflict as long as "the law" is enforced. But during the same month, President Obama announced his administration's intentions to "ensure adoption rights for all couples and individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation" to complement his administration's previous announcement to work toward eliminating the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) through executive orders and in the courts. [Read more](#)

2. The U.S. Bishops now recognize that the Obama Administration has been taking actions to avoid allowing any Catholic organizations from participating in any grants, specifically those which have been part of a long-standing USCCB program to help the [victims of sex trafficking](#). The Administration has recently denied grants to USCCB organizations because they do not provide the victims of sex trafficking "full and comprehensive reproductive services." This is the code language for abortions, sterilizations, and contraception on demand.
3. Here is an interesting story about a Catholic Church in Brooklyn and how it created a situation which essentially lowered the abortion rate in that part of the city.

Mother of the Unborn – by Gregory Pfundstein

The Chiaroscuro Foundation recently released New York City abortion data by zip code in the form of a map. Since it took us a while to have the map developed, we have actually had the data for some time. As we thought about it and discussed it, it occurred to us that the zip codes with particularly low abortion rates were perhaps even more interesting than the zip codes with particularly high rates. We wondered why some zip codes, such as 11219 in Brooklyn, came in substantially lower than many other parts of the city. We decided to see if we could find anything interesting in some of these places. [Read more](#)

4. Thank you for your participation in the 40 Days for Life

Thank you to all who participated in the 40 Days for Life Campaign! Saint Raymond's does indeed Respect Life and showed it by both public and private prayer as well as fasting, sacrifices and well over 200 individual witness hours outside the abortion clinic on Duke Street.

Many of those hours were cold, wet and windy. They were not convenient. Yet they were indeed grace filled and mattered greatly.

Remember that this is a spiritual battle... "Nothing we do to defend the human person, no matter how small, is ever unfruitful or forgotten. Our actions touch other lives and move other hearts in ways we can never fully understand in this world. Don't ever underestimate the beauty and power of the witness you give in your pro-life work."

~ Archbishop Charles Chaput, *Politics and the Devil: Living in a World of Unbelief*, South Bend, Ind., April 8, 2011 ~

God Bless You! We'll be back on the sidewalks in the Spring!

Parish Calendar of Respect Life Events:

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| November 20 th | after the 12:15 Mass – 1 st birthday party for Anna Sofia Rae's (found in our parking lot one year ago) (no gifts please) |
| November 26 th | 9:00 a.m. Bishop Loverde celebrates his monthly Respect Life Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Arlington and then prays at a local abortion facility. |
| November 30 th | Quarterly Respect Life Committee Meeting – 7:30 p.m., Parish Library. |
| December 1 st | 7:00 p.m. Natural Family Planning Class series begins (Classroom near Parish Hall). |
| December 17 th | 9:00 a.m. Bishop Loverde celebrates his monthly Respect Life Mass at St. Philip Church in Falls Church and then prays at a local abortion facility. |
| January 23 rd | March for Life – Buses will depart from St. Raymond's Parish after a special 10:00 a.m. Mass. Sign-up sheets will be available in the Narthex in January. |
| February 9 th | 7:30 p.m. St. Raymond's Speaker Series – Marjorie Dannenfelser , President, Susan B. Anthony List, Parish Hall. |